

Ugandan Victims' Eyes are on the ICC as LRA Commander Dominic Ongwen faces Judges

Wednesday 20 January 2016

(The Hague, Kampala) On 21 January 2016, the confirmation of charges hearing of former senior commander of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), Dominic Ongwen, will open at the International Criminal Court (ICC). Our organisations welcome this important step for more than 2000 participating victims and thousands of Ugandan survivors of the most atrocious crimes committed by LRA, who have been awaiting justice for over ten years.

"This hearing sends a strong message that irrespective of the time justice may take, the perpetrators will be held accountable for the crimes they have committed. We hope that the proceedings will send a strong signal of deterrence to those responsible LRA members who are still at large and contribute to decreasing the power of this armed rebel group that is still terrorizing civilians in the region."

said our organisations

Dominic Ongwen is charged with being criminally responsible for 67 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed between July 2002 and December 2005 in 4 camps for internally displaced persons (IDP) in northern Uganda. The charges include counts related to the use and conscription of child soldiers, sexual and gender-based crimes, attacks on IDP camps and persecution. Our organisations welcome this extension of charges, by the OTP, particularly to include charges of rape, forced marriage and sexual slavery previously excluded from the counts against him.

"We hope victims in the Ongwen case will be able to genuinely exercise their right to participate in proceedings and express their views and concerns through effective legal representation. Victims need a legal aid scheme that respects their interests."

added our organisations

At least 2026 victims have been granted the right to participate in the Ongwen confirmation of charges hearing. 1434 victims are represented by two external lawyers of their choice, who were excluded by the ICC Pre-Trial Chamber from the possibility of obtaining legal aid.

For further information: [FIDH-FHRI Q&A on the Ongwen case and the ICC](#)

P.S.

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